

I just wanted to weigh in with a few thoughts on Oregon's legislators proposing to criminalize public use of drugs and re-criminalization of user/personal level possession. I have never been a user of such drugs, my drug of choice was alcohol and medicinal marijuana. There was a time my use of marijuana would have made its way into these laws prior to medical and recreational legalizations.

I feel there just has to be a better way to treat these issues than arresting people on criminal grounds. I sit in prison and view the majority of users and their tendency to use in prison. If they don't use they likely subscribe to the, "It's a chance to get healthy, gain some weight and get ready to hit the street doing what they know best," philosophy. I hear all kinds of people talk of using the minute they walk out of here, many before they are out of the DSP grounds.

I just don't see how sending more people to jail/prison, an already overwhelmed and broken system, is going to do anything positive for society. Before the legislature enacts a piece of legislation that will certainly bog down the already taxed system they should look at possibilities that would help the offenders.

Locking folks away is not the solution to societies ills. We as a society must get over our fears and nurture and care for those that struggle, especially with addictions. We can care for strangers just like we do our own families. Make time to get to know people and ask what they need, but don't make a law to lock 'em up and toss the key, turning your backs on those in need.

Thank you for allowing my voice to be heard,

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